

A CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD AND ITS ANTECEDENTS, MARCH

12 March 1911. The California National Guard established an Aeronautical Detachment of its 7th Coast Artillery Company. Eugene Ely became the unit's first private.¹

26 March 1918. Col. Raynal C. Bolling, a former New York National Guardsman who had established and commanded that state's First Aero Company, was killed by German infantry during a ground reconnaissance near Amiens, France. He was the most senior American military aviator to die during World War I.²

7 March 1927. Accompanied by MSgt Clyde Plank, 1st Lt Daniel F. Kearns of the Colorado National Guard's 120th Observation Squadron flew one of the unit's Douglas O-2C biplanes to Silverton in the southwestern corner of the state to deliver badly needed typhoid vaccine over the 11,000 to 12,000 foot mountain peaks which ringed that community. The 120th's first mercy mission was launched because devastating snowstorms had completely isolated Silverton from the outside world for six weeks and civil authorities feared the outbreak of a typhoid epidemic.³

28 March 1944. The 118th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, formerly the 118th Observation Squadron, Connecticut National Guard, began flying defensive patrols in India. It was the first of five former National Guard air units to conduct combat operations in the China-Burma-India theater. The others were the 103rd and 123rd Photographic Reconnaissance Squadrons plus the 115th and 127th Liaison Squadrons.⁴

March 1950. *The National Guardsman* magazine announced that, in accordance with the National Defense Act, four Air Guard officers had been called to active duty tours of four years each with Headquarters, U.S. Air Force to deal with all matters pertaining to the Air National Guard. They were: Col. Clinton A. Burrows, California; Col. Orren H. Lane, Georgia; Lt. Col. Edward H. Bradford, Massachusetts; and Lt. Col. Royal Hatch, Jr., Alabama.⁵

March 1952. The Air Force established the mobilization assignment of all ANG fighter units in the continental U.S. as air defense.⁶

1 March 1953. The 138th Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Syracuse, New York and the 194th Fighter Bomber Squadron at Hayward, California began

an experimental augmentation of ADC's runway alert program by Air Guard fighter units. Each unit maintained two F-51Ds and five pilots on alert from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset throughout the week. Based upon the experiment's success, continuous Air Guard participation in the runway alert program was adopted in 1954. It marked the beginning of the Air Force's total force approach to reserve component utilization and training.⁷

27 March 1953. Maj. James P. Hagerstrom, a Texas Air Guardsman flying an F-86 in a regular Air Force unit, shot down a MiG 15 raising his total kills to 5.5 during that war. Hagerstrom was the fourth Air Guardsman to become an ace in Korea. He ended the conflict with 8.5 confirmed kills. During World War II, Hagerstrom had downed 8 enemy aircraft in the Southwest Pacific while a member of the Army Air Forces. He remained in the active duty Air Force after the Korean War.⁸

March 1959. Flying their Northrop F-89H Scorpions from Tyndall AFB, Florida, pilots of the 109th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Minnesota ANG, became the first Air Guardsmen to live fire FALCON, radar-guided air-to-air missiles.⁹

March 1959. Members of the New York Air Guard's 213th Ground Electronics Engineering and Installation Agency Squadron spent their 15-day annual training period installing communications facilities at the Air Force's Cape Canaveral missile test center and nearby Patrick AFB, Florida. It was the first time an ANG unit had been employed in the huge expansion project underway at Canaveral. The unit's deployment to Florida combined useful work and realistic "live scheme" training.¹⁰

March 1960. Selected aircrews from six ANG C-97 units completed retraining with the Military Air Transportation Service at Travis AFB, California. They then made transoceanic checkout flights to Tachikawa AFB, Japan and back.¹¹

March 1962. *The Air Reservist* magazine reported that personnel from three Air Guard Aircraft Control and Warning Squadrons located in Denver, Colorado, Salt Lake City, Utah and Puerto Rico were manning radar sites on a fulltime basis for the Air Defense Command. In Hawaii, an Air Guard Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron also operated a radar site around-the-clock.¹²

27 March 1964. After one of the most gigantic earthquakes in its history caused enormous damage in Alaska, members of the ANG's 144th Air Transport Squadron helped rescue victims in Anchorage and provided food and shelter to them, reestablished vital communications across the state, and airlifted rescue workers and supplies to other stricken communities. The unit's C-123Js flew

77 sorties airlifting 201 passengers and 131,054 pounds of cargo within a week during its relief operations. They were aided by Air Guardsmen from four other states who flew 12 airlift missions carrying relief supplies to Alaska.¹³

March 1964. Illinois Air Guardsmen assigned to the 126th Air Refueling Group installed and began testing a prototype conversion of a Boeing KC-97G Stratotanker which gave that aircraft the capability to refuel any fighter in the Air Force inventory. That initiative, which they had suggested, involved installing jet engines pods and an improved rendezvous radar equipment on a KC-97G from KB-50s which the Air Force had withdrawn from service. The prototype cost \$40,000.00. Based on the experiment's success, the Air Force approved a proposal to modify all 54 Stratotankers in the ANG inventory with jet engines and improved radar. The jet-augmented ANG aircraft were designated KC-97Ls.¹⁴

3-13 March 1969. Astronaut Russell L. Schweickart, a former Massachusetts Air Guard fighter pilot, orbited the earth in NASA's Apollo 9 space vehicle¹⁵

28 March 1969. Maj Clyde Seiler, a pilot in the Colorado Air Guard's mobilized 120th Fighter Squadron, was killed when his F-100 crashed after being hit by enemy ground fire during a strafing mission in Vietnam.¹⁶

March 1969. *The National Guardsman* magazine reported that the Illinois Air Guard's 126th Tactical Hospital had recently deployed a 36-bed hospital with a 30-day stock of supplies from its home station at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport to Kindley AFB, Bermuda aboard a C-97 Stratofreighter and a KC-97L Stratotanker from the 126th Air Refueling Wing. That unit airlifted 24 personnel and 25,000 pounds of equipment to Bermuda to handle its 13-tent hospital complex. The two-week exercise was the first known deployment of an ANG hospital unit outside the continental U.S. for training.¹⁷

23-26 March 1970. Following a declaration of national emergency by President Richard M. Nixon because of a wildcat strike by the Manhattan-Bronx Letter Carrier's Union, over 14,000 New York Army and Air Guardsmen along with thousands of active duty and federal reserve forces personnel were mobilized to assist postal supervisors in making sure that the mail was delivered in the metropolitan New York City area.¹⁸

March 1972. *The National Guardsman* magazine reported that the Minnesota Air Guard's 133rd Training Flight had recently begun training members of the Spanish Air Force to become instructors in the operation and maintenance of KC-97 Stratotankers. Spain had purchased KC-97s from the U.S. to refuel its fighter aircraft. In addition to working with Spanish, the 133rd also provided transition training on the KC-97 and C-130 to other ANG units.¹⁹

4 March 1976. Former Iowa Air Guardsman, Colonel George E. Day, USAF, was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Gerald R. Ford for his personal bravery after his F-100 Super Sabre was shot down on 26 April 1976 during a "Misty FAC" mission over North Vietnam. After he was captured by North Vietnamese troops, the badly wounded flyer escaped and traveled back to South Vietnam where he was shot and captured by Viet Cong soldiers. Day then endured a brutal 67-month imprisonment before being released on 14 March 1973.²⁰

12 March 1976. A KC-135A from Ohio's 145th Air Refueling Squadron became the first ANG tanker to participate in a Strategic Air Command (SAC) over water air refueling. The Guard aircraft helped SAC KC-135s refuel A-7s deploying from California to Hawaii.²¹

1-17 March 1979. Air Guardsmen from Alabama's 226th Combat Communications Group and Hawaii's 201st Combat Communications Group deployed to the Republic of Korea to participate in Team Spirit 79. It was the first field training exercise involving the Combined Forces Command, the newly integrated command structure for U.S. and Republic of Korea forces in the latter nation.²²

30 March 1979. Pennsylvania Air Guardsmen assigned to the 193rd Tactical Electronic Warfare Group at Harrisburg International Airport began providing local transportation to members of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and White House teams that descended on the area to deal with the nuclear reactor incident at the nearby Three Mile Island power plant. Members of the ANG unit's maintenance squadron logged 310 hours parking, unloading, and servicing transient aircraft during the incident. Personnel assigned to the 193rd's field maintenance shop built special shipping containers, racks, and detector shields for use by NRC personnel.²³

17-20 March 1982. To protect Fort Wayne, Indiana against the rapidly rising flood waters of the three rivers that converged within its boundaries, Governor Robert Orr mobilized the Air Guard's 122nd Tactical Fighter Wing and elements of Army Guard units to assist local authorities. Air Guardsmen focused on providing supervisors to the efforts to build up the existing system of dikes that protected the city. They also established a vital communications network that linked the workers on the dikes with the unit's home station at Fort Wayne Municipal Airport and the city's downtown command post. Their efforts were successful and the dikes held.²⁴

18-21 March 1983. The Hawaii Air National Guard's 154th Composite Group deployed personnel from its fighter squadron as well as its aircraft control and warning squadron plus six F-4Cs to South Korea for the Team Spirit exercise.

The 201st Combat Communications Group, Hawaii ANG, and the 251st Combat Communications Group, Ohio ANG, also sent personnel and equipment to South Korea for the exercise.²⁵

March 1983. The 189th Tactical Training Flight and the Reconnaissance Weapons School were organized by the Idaho ANG at Boise's Gowen Field to train ANG RF-4C replacement crews and to teach advanced tactics to ANG RF-4C crews.²⁶

March 1990. The Idaho Air Guard enlarged its RF-4C reconnaissance training program at Boise under a project called "USAF Top Off" to include not only ANG aircrews but active duty Air Force ones as well.²⁷

11 March 1992. Brig. Gen. J. M. Hafen, Utah ANG, reported to Maj. Gen. Phil Killey, ANG Director, that the B-52H mission which had been offered to the ANG by the Air Force was "doable" but not as desirable as the KC-135 mission.²⁸

24 March 1992. Astronaut and former Massachusetts Air Guard A-10 pilot Byron K. Lichtenberg served as a payload specialist aboard the Space Shuttle *Atlantis* (STS-45) which was launched into orbit on this date. It was Lichtenberg's second space flight. The *Atlantis* landed safely on 2 April 1992.²⁹

11 March 1993. An Air Force report on Base Realignment and Closure recommended that, contrary to the recommendations of the 1991 commission, the 121st Air Refueling Wing (ARW) and 160th Air Refueling Group, Ohio ANG, should remain at the Rickenbacker ANG Base, Ohio. It also called for the closure of O'Hare Air Reserve Station in Illinois and that the 126th ARW, Illinois ANG, be moved to another location.³⁰

March 1993. The 124th Fighter Group, Idaho ANG, sent F-4G "Advanced Wild Weasel" aircraft and volunteers to Saudi Arabia to help enforce the no-fly zone over Iraq in Operation Southern Watch.³¹

9 March 1996. After Cuban fighters shot down two U.S. civilian aircraft over the Straits of Florida, F-15s from the 125th Fighter Wing (FW), Florida ANG, were scrambled from Homestead AFB to provide a combat air patrol over the U.S. Coast Guard's search and rescue operations in international waters off the Cuban coast. The 125th FW flew 15 armed sorties on 9-10 March. They were joined by F-16s from Minnesota's 148th FW which flew eight sorties from their alert site at Tyndall AFB, Florida.³²

1 March 1997. Lt. Col. Martha Rainville, Vermont Air Guard, was sworn in as the nation's first female Adjutant General ever by the state's Governor,

Howard Dean.³³

March 1997. 12 F-16s from the ANG and AFRES deployed to Incirlick AB, Turkey to form a "rainbow unit" of fighters to support Operation Northern Watch to help maintain a no-fly zone over the northern portion of Iraq. Units involved were Wisconsin's 115th Fighter Wing (FW) and Ohio's 178th FW plus the Air Force Reserve's 419th FW.³⁴

26 March 1998. Representatives of the National Science Foundation (NSF), Department of Defense, Air Force, Navy, U.S. Transportation Command, and the NGB signed a Memorandum of Agreement turning over responsibility for providing airlift support of NSF operations in Antarctica from the U.S. Navy to the New York ANG's 109th Airlift Wing.³⁵

27 March 1999. About 100 Air Guard volunteers and two EC-130 Commando Solo aircraft from Pennsylvania's 193rd Special Operations Wing deployed to Germany to support the NATO air campaign against Yugoslavia, Operation Allied Force.³⁶

28 March 1999. The NGB requested help for Operation Allied Force from Nebraska's 155th Air Refueling Wing. Less than 60 hours later, wing personnel and 3 of their KC-135 tankers were on the ground at Rhine Main Air Base, Germany.³⁷

17 March 2001. A C-5 Galaxy assigned to the New York Air Guard's 105th Airlift Wing delivered 65,600 pounds of relief supplies to earthquake-ravaged El Salvador at the San Salvador International Airport.³⁸

4 March 2002. Tech. Sgt. Keary Miller, a Kentucky Air Guard pararescue specialist from 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, cared for wounded personnel and participated in a firefight with nearby enemy forces after the Army special operations helicopter he was riding was shot down on a mountain named Taku Ghar in eastern Afghanistan. For his heroism and professional skill during that 15-hour ordeal in Operation Enduring Freedom, Miller was awarded the Silver Star, the nation's third highest award for valor.³⁹

25 March 2003. Maj. Gregory L. Stone, Idaho ANG, died of his injuries two days after a U.S. Army soldier allegedly threw a grenade into his tent in Kuwait. Stone was serving as an air liaison officer with the Army's 101st Airborne Division.⁴⁰

29 March 2003. SSgt. Jacob Frazier, a member of the Illinois ANG's 169th Air Support Operations Squadron, died when his four-vehicle reconnaissance patrol was ambushed in southern Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

He was the first Air Guardsman to be killed in action against enemy forces since the Vietnam War.⁴¹

12 March 2004. Col. George T. Lynn, Georgia ANG, Commander, 116th Air Control Wing (ACW), was promoted to brigadier general in a ceremony at Robins AFB, Georgia. The 116th ACW was the first and only blended active duty Air Force/ANG wing in the USAF.⁴²

March 2004. Detachment 1, Headquarters Nevada Air National Guard was established in March 2004 with the intent of developing it into the Air Guard's first Predator associate unit.⁴³

23 March 2005. The Air Force took delivery of its final E-8C Joint STARS aircraft. It was the seventeenth production model of the aircraft - all of which were assigned to the blended ANG/USAF 116th Air Control Wing at Robins AFB, Georgia.⁴⁴

March 2005. Nevada Air National Guardsmen began working in association with Air Force personnel to learn how to operate Predator drones.⁴⁵

NOTES

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- ¹⁶ *Colorado Pride*, p 217.
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